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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 USNATO 000241

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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT - JULY 9, 2008

Classified By: CDA Richard G. Olson, Jr., for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C/NF) Summary from the NAC Meeting:

-- Afghanistan: The Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC) provided an update of the EUPOL mission which currently has 166 personnel deployed to Afghanistan to assist the Afghan National Police. The SYG stated that there had been a number of additional civilian casualty incidents in the last week which have served to highlight the damaging effect this issue is having on NATO's credibility and strategic messaging. Referring to the recent report by UN U/SYG Holmes on civilian casualties in Afghanistan, the SYG said NATO must to have up to date, accurate numbers readily available for release to the public and be prepared to explain the basis of these numbers and stand by them. U.S. Charge Olson stressed that NATO must resist the temptation to try to place blame for civilian casualties on partners, such as OEF. The Bulgarian PermRep announced plans to deploy 50 additional troops to Kandahar Airfield in August and then increase their Kabul contingent to approximately 500 troops with additional troops set to deploy in November.

-- Balkans: The SYG highlighted the formation of new governments in Serbia and Macedonia, saying that he hoped that this would bring a new degree of political stability to the region, and stressed the importance of the July 11 Kosovo Donors Conference in Brussels. The CMC briefed the Council on the current status of the EULEX mission and UNMIK reconfiguration, and SHAPE reported that the overall situation is calm and stable despite recent tensions. U.S.

Charge Olson reiterated the importance of EULEX timely rollout and its deployment throughout Kosovo.

-- Africa - Support to the African Union: The SYG noted that he has placed under silence a recommendation that NATO's Senior Military Liaison Officer to the AU be a continuous position and stressed the importance of the position for maintaining continuity in NATO's relationship with the AU.

-- Iraq: No discussion.

-- Response to Terrorism: The SYG and Charge Olson expressed their condolences to the Turkish PermRep for the three Turkish police officers killed during a July 9 terrorist attack on the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul.

-- Statements on Political Subjects: The Czech PermRep briefed Allies on his country's bilateral agreement with the U.S. on the basing of the radar for the U.S. European Pillar Missile Defense (MD) system. Charge Olson noted that the U.S. wanted a missile defense system to enhance both NATO's and the international community's security.

-- AOB: The SYG proposed a plan of action for NATO to develop a policy in response to UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and announced that he would present this plan to NATO's EAPC partners later that day.

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END SUMMARY.

Afghanistan

12. (C/NF) EUPOL MISSION -- The Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC), Admiral DiPaola, reported that EUPOL's mission is focused on providing administration and mentoring assistance to the Afghanistan National Police, and is not focused on training or mentoring police in the field. There are currently 166 personnel (122 police and 44 civilian experts) deployed to Afghanistan. The EU would like to bring the number of personnel up to approximately 300 before the end of 2008.

13. (C/NF) ISAF OPERATIONS UPDATE -- The SHAPE Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, MG Wright, reported that the bombing outside of the Indian Embassy in Kabul was likely targeted at the Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan. There were 42 civilian casualties as a result of this bombing. MG Wright also reported that while there have been incidents on ISAF's two main supply route through Pakistan, the routes are still open as of now. To mitigate the risk of OMF halting supplies to ISAF, there are also northern routes used to bring in fuel and supplies. MG Wright said that ISAF's planning efforts remains focused on three areas: Kabul transfer of security responsibilities, support to voter registration, and follow-on to Operation SHAMSHIR.

14. (C/NF) The Portuguese PermRep asked whether ISAF should assess the effects of the Indian Embassy bombing on plans to transfer security responsibility in Kabul to the ANA. MG Wright responded that the incident was not expected to cause any delay in the August transfer. He noted the ANSF responded promptly and professionally to the bombing.

15. (C/NF) CIVILIAN CASUALTIES) Turning to the issue of civilian casualties, MG Wright reported that since September 2007, when ISAF revised its system for reviewing claims of civilian casualties, it had investigated 83 deaths and found that ISAF was responsible for 44 of those. So far this year, ISAF has accepted responsibility for 13 deaths, although four further incidents are under investigation.

16. (C/NF) Continuing, MG Wright said ISAF was aware of the UN

humanitarian affairs chief John Holmes's assessment that the GIROA and international military forces are responsible for 255 deaths this year. ISAF disagrees with this figure, which it assesses as too high. ISAF has had a constructive meeting with UNAMA and has requested a more detailed breakdown of how they reached their total. He said ISAF is confident in the rigor of its investigations. Nonetheless, ISAF is currently reviewing their procedures to check that all such incidents are properly noted and investigated.

¶17. (C/NF) MG Wright reminded the Council that all ISAF forces operate under tight Rules of Engagement and in full respect of the Laws of Armed Conflict as well as the Tactical

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Directive issued last September on avoiding civilian casualties. Since the Tactical Directive was issued, there has been a steep decline in civilian deaths caused by ISAF. Civilian deaths caused by insurgents have escalated over this same time period, reflecting their increasing use of indiscriminate tactics. This year ISAF records indicate that insurgent forces have killed more than 350 civilians and wounded a further 800.

¶18. (C/NF) The SYG stated that there have been a number of additional incidents in the last week which have served to highlight the damaging effect civilian casualties have on NATO's credibility and strategic messaging. The Tactical Directive made a difference; but the problem has not gone away. He stated there is little, if any, distinction being made between the different element of the international military presences in Afghanistan when it comes to civilian casualties and particularly those caused by air strikes. The SYG continued by commenting that, whether the NAC agrees or not, NATO is perceived as being responsible for civilian casualties resulting from all military operations. He concluded that there is a growing divergence between perceptions and the reality on the ground, which is a policy issue that needs to be addressed at the political level. The SYG said that the UN's John Holmes had not been at all helpful in going public with his numbers prior to discussing them with NATO. He stressed it is important for the NATO spokesman to have up to date, accurate numbers readily available for release to the public.

¶19. (C/NF) The Spanish PermRep reminded the NAC that civilian casualties are a strategic risk mentioned in the OPLAN. He noted SACEUR's letter regarding last year's Tactical Directive directed an early public reaction from ISAF to any incident involving civilian casualties. He added that NATO did not need to engage in a public debate over which forces were at fault. Additionally, the UNSCR authorizes both OEF and ISAF, so the point is both forces are called upon to engage responsibly.

¶10. (C/NF) U.S. Charge Olson, deploying interagency cleared guidance, said that OEF, like ISAF, makes every effort to avoid civilian casualties and that OEF also adopted the ISAF Tactical Directive on avoiding civilian casualties. He stressed that Opposing Militant Forces (OMF) attack from civilian areas, retreat into civilian areas, and conceal themselves as civilians while continuing fire upon Afghan and international forces. Charge Olson said that while NATO and the UN may disagree on the number of civilian casualties, Holmes also said in his report that most civilian casualties are caused by the insurgents, that it is clear that the international military forces are making every effort to minimize civilian casualties, and that the proportion of civilian casualties caused by security forces has dropped by nearly half from last year. NATO needs to also push back against any attempt to draw a moral equivalence between civilian casualties caused unintentionally by international forces and those caused intentionally by insurgents. NATO must also resist the temptation in our public discussions to

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blame partners, such as OEF, but should stress that all international forces are taking every appropriate precaution to avoid civilian casualties.

¶11. (C/NF) The UK PermRep said NATO should not get into a numbers game in the press and that it is important in the media to play on the similarities with the UN report, as mentioned by the U.S. The Norwegian PermRep said NATO needs to respond more rapidly in the press, since many in the media are already treating the UN figures as authoritative. The Belgian, Canadian and Italian PermReps both added that NATO must have a sound methodology for accounting of civilian casualties and then be able support our figures publicly and in a timely manner.

¶12. (C/NF) OTHER COMMENTS -- Canada requested an update on the NATO/Pakistan relations. The Canadian PermRep also made an impassioned plea for the upgrade of Kandahar's role 3 military hospital (note: a request that has been blocked in NATO's Infrastructure Committee by the French. End Note.) He said the hospital is plagued with deficiencies and must be upgraded by the next fighting season. Should the situation remain unresolved, its inadequate nature risks becoming a political liability in Canada, beyond its current nature as a serious operational and troop morale issue.

¶13. (C/NF) The UK PermRep requested that the SYG ask SHAPE for an ISAF election support update. He also concurred with Canada's plea for upgrade of the Kandahar military hospital, read graphic excerpts from a UK report on the facility's serious shortcomings, and stated that the British Surgeon General called the facility "inadequate."

¶14. (C/NF) The Bulgarian PermRep reported Bulgaria will deploy 50 additional troops to Kandahar Airfield in August and then bring their Kabul contingency up to approximately 500 with additional troops set to deploy in November.

¶15. (C/NF) The SYG welcomed yesterday's NAC approval of the PRT Implementation Guidance. He closed by mentioning the SCR will join next week's NAC via VTC and that on July 22 SHAPE will brief the status of ISAF election support planning.

Balkans

¶16. (C/NF) The SYG highlighted the formation of new governments in Serbia and Macedonia, saying that he hoped that this would bring a new degree of political stability to the region. The SYG also stressed the importance of the July 11 Kosovo Donors Conference in Brussels, stating that the International Civilian Representative, Peter Feith, and Kosovo Prime Minister Thaci would attend. Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Operations Pardew will represent NATO at the conference. The CMC briefed the Council on the current status of the EULEX mission and UNMIK reconfiguration, saying that the planned reconfiguration does allow for flexibility and that EULEX is considering

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increasing the number of formed police for minority and border areas. The CMC also said that currently there are 267 EULEX personnel on the ground in Kosovo. MG Wright reported that the overall situation is calm and stable despite recent tensions. He informed the Council that the UK's operational reserve battalion has redeployed from Kosovo and currently COMKFOR has 54 maneuver companies in theatre, but has multiple response options should the security situation deteriorate.

¶17. (C/NF) MG Wright provided an update on the status of NATO's implementation of the new tasks in Kosovo, saying that manning shortfalls in the MCAD-NTT (Military Civil Advisory

Division and NATO Training Teams) were likely to negatively impact NATO's ability to fulfill its commitments unless nations provided the necessary resources. Wright said there are 44 unbid positions out of a requirement of 158. NATO is planning to begin vetting of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) personnel for their potential integration into the new security force (KSF) in August, followed by the commencement of training in November. NATO expects that the new KSF will reach initial operating capability no later than September 2009. MG Wright also informed the NAC that invitations to donate to both the KPC Stand-Down and KSF Stand-Up Trust funds have been sent to nations, but to date both accounts have zero balances.

118. (C/NF) U.S. Charge Olson thanked the CMC for his briefing regarding the status of the EULEX mission and reiterated the importance of EULEX deploying throughout Kosovo in a timely manner. Led by Hungary, Greece, Norway and Spain all praised the formation of the new government in Serbia, stressing its European credentials and its desire to pursue further EU integration. (See septel on Serbian remarks at same day's EAPC, where the Serbian Ambassador, while noting publicly stated Tadic interest in working with PfP, criticized KFOR's "new tasks" and said that KFOR/Serb military MTA coordination had been reduced as a consequence of NATO moving "beyond (UNSCR) 1244 into areas where it had no authority.") These four Allies also remarked that NATO should continue to stand ready to provide the assistance proffered under PfP. Norway and Italy mentioned that their nations stand ready to contribute to the trust funds, but their capitals needed further fidelity and clarity on the requirements for both. MG Wright, in response, acknowledged that there was still work to be done at SHAPE, but assured PermReps that SHAPE soon would provide the necessary details.

Africa - Support to the AU

119. (C/NF) The SYG noted he has placed under silence procedure SG(2008)0577, which proposes maintaining a NATO Senior Military Liaison Officer (SLMO) to the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa on a continuous basis. Currently, the position is based on a 6-month renewable term, and the officer is already in Addis.

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Response to Terrorism

120. (C/NF) The SYG and Charge Olson expressed their condolences to the Turkish PermRep for the three Turkish police officers killed during a July 9 terrorist attack on the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul. After accepting the condolences, the Turkish PermRep also noted that three perpetrators died during the attack.

Statements on Political Subjects

121. (C/NF) The Czech PermRep briefed Allies on his country's bilateral agreement with the U.S. on the basing of the radar for the MD system. Charge Olson highlighted that the U.S. wanted a broad missile defense system to enhance both NATO's and the international community's security.

AOB

122. (C/NF) The SYG raised the issue of NATO's response to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. He proposed a three-part plan that

called upon NATO's two strategic commands (ACO, ACT) to provide implementation guidelines: the International Staff and International Military Staff to work with interested Allies to develop political-military guidance; and the NAC to consider the proposed guidance for approval. He also said that this policy would need to be developed within a limited timeframe. Since no objections were raised in response to this plan, the SYG announced that he would present it to NATO's partners in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

OLSON